

Summary: Allegations of Grant Fraud at Mojave National Preserve Not Substantiated

Report date: November 3, 2015

OIG investigated allegations that park rangers at the National Park Service's Mojave National Preserve (MNP) submitted false hours and misappropriated funds related to a grant from the State of California.

We determined that MNP received four grants through California's Department of Parks and Recreation, totaling \$658,087 between 2009 and 2011, for the purpose of monitoring off-highway vehicles. Under the agreement, MNP was required to provide a 25-percent match of funds through labor costs and hours worked.

We learned that park rangers and other MNP employees performed work on the grants but had not documented the matching hours. As a result, MNP had no official record showing it had met its 25-percent match. We learned that MNP employees were asked to recall the 2-year period in question and record the matching hours worked by reviewing time and attendance records or patrol logs, but we could not substantiate the allegation that MNP employees submitted fraudulent hours worked on the grants.

We also determined that the State approved all purchases MNP made using grant funds.

We provided a copy of this report the NPS Director for information only.

This is a summary of an investigative report that was issued internally to the U.S. Department of the Interior. This summary was posted to the web on December 7, 2015.

